

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows (deleted matter is indicated by strikethrough or double brackets, and added matter is indicated by underlining):

Please replace paragraph 0001 on page 1, with the following amended paragraph:

[0001] This application is a divisional application of ~~Design~~ Application No. 10/391,179, filed March 14, 2003, which is a continuation-in-part application of Design Application Nos. 29/168,675, now Design Patent No. D478,933, and 29/168,681, now Design Patent No. D480,107, both filed October 8, 2002; which are divisional applications of Design Application No. 29/153,606, filed January 14, 2002, now Design Patent No. D468,354; which is a continuation-in-part application of Design Application No. 29/145,136, filed July 17, 2001, now Design Patent No. D456,041.

Please replace paragraph 0012 on page 3, with the following amended paragraph:

[0012] **Fig. 2** is an elevational view of a gripping element as in Fig. 1 rotated 90°, that may be used in accordance with the principles of the present invention, and showing a second shape of an exemplary elevated pattern on the gripping element;

Please replace paragraph 0013 on page 4, with the following amended paragraph:

[0013] Fig. 3 is a front elevational view of a writing instrument with an exemplary gripping element as in ~~Fig.~~ **Figs. 1 and 2** positioned substantially at the midpoint of the writing instrument in accordance with one aspect of the present invention;

Please replace paragraph 0014 on page 4, with the following amended paragraph:

[0014] **Fig. 4** is a side elevational view of a writing instrument with an exemplary gripping element as in ~~Fig.~~ **Figs. 1 and 2** positioned substantially at the midpoint of the writing instrument in accordance with one aspect of the present invention;

Please replace paragraph 0022 on page 5, with the following amended paragraph:

[0022] It will be appreciated that the same gripping element may be fitted over either type of article. If desired, gripping element **10** may be formed to be removable from the article and placeable on alternate articles as desired. In addition or alternatively, an article may be prefabricated with gripping element **10**. As may be appreciated from the Figures, gripping element **10** has discrete ends spaced from the ends of the writing instrument itself ~~spaced~~ and is not to be mistaken for a uniform covering over the entire length of the article.

Please replace paragraph 0024 on pages 5-6, with the following amended paragraph:

[0024] Gripping element 10 may be formed with a mounting structure, such as a receiving channel 18, by which gripping element 10 may be optionally mounted on an article. It is noted that reference herein is made to a “receiving channel” for the sake of convenience, and not with any intent to limit the mounting structure to only a “receiving channel.” Receiving channel 18 is configured to receive a portion of an article such as a writing instrument, securely therein. Receiving channel 18 preferably is dimensioned and configured to correspond to the outer dimension of the portion of the article on which grip element 10 is to be mounted so that this portion is securely maintained therein. For example, the receiving channel 18 is typically more than about 0.2 inch (0.5 cm) to fit over a finger-manipulated article and typically is less than about 2.0 inches (5.0 cm) to fit even a typical hand-held article. In the present invention, a finger-held or finger-manipulated article (referenced herein as only “finger-held” for the sake of simplicity and not for limiting purposes) is an article configured for grasping and/or manipulation by a user’s fingers during its ordinary use and typically receives pressure or force applied by a user’s fingers or fingertips. Exemplary finger-held or finger-manipulated articles include, but are not limited to, writing implements, shavers, razors, toothbrushes, eating utensils, precision instruments, scissors, and the like. According to the present invention, finger-held articles are to be distinguished from “hand-held” articles which are intended to be held by a user’s hand (in contrast to only by the fingers) under a normal use circumstance. Examples of hand-held articles can include, but are not limited to, sports rackets, sports equipment handles (*e.g.*, bicycle or motorcycle handles), steering wheels, tools (*e.g.*, hammers), cooking utensils, and the like. However, the mounting structure 15 may be configured in any other manner to secure the article therein. For example, an interior of receiving channel 18 may include flexible protrusions, which resiliently conform to the exterior of the portion of the article to be received within receiving channel 18. If desired, the article and receiving channel 18 may be matingly contoured, such as by the provision of grooves on one and ribs on the other which mate or engage with one another.

Please replace paragraphs 0030, 0031, and 0032 on page 9, with the following amended paragraphs:

[0030] Gripping element 10 has a substantially cylindrical portion 50 extending over central region 40. In addition, gripping element 10 may include a band 52 of a wider diameter than cylindrical portion 50 (adjacent first end 13 when positioned on a writing instrument 12). Preferably, the outer diameter of band 52 abuts and has the same outer

diameter as the outer diameter of a cap **54** that may cover first end **42 13** so that a substantially uniform diameter is achieved when cap **54** covers first end **42**.

[0031] In one embodiment of the invention, shown in Fig. 7, gripping element **10** includes a front conical gripping portion **60** covering front nose cone **62** of writing instrument **12**. Thus, a portion of gripping element **10** may extend over front nose cone **62** toward the writing tip or nib **73** to enhance gripping even when writing instrument **12** is used for fine writing. Front conical gripping portion **60** of gripping element **10** may be formed as a single piece with substantially cylindrical portion **50** of gripping element **10**. However, if desired, front conical gripping portion **60** may be of the same or similar material as gripping element **10**, but comprised of a separately formed piece positioned preferably adjacent gripping element **10**. If a front conical gripping portion **60** is provided, band **52** may be formed as a part of front conical gripping portion **60**, separate from substantially cylindrical portion **50** (*see, e.g.*, Fig. 6). Front nose cone **55 62** may optionally be covered by cap **54** wherein the writing end of writing instrument **12**, as well as front conical gripping portion **40 60** are configured and dimensioned to receive cap **54**.

[0032] In the embodiment of Fig. 8, writing instrument **12** has a writing tip at both ends. Preferably, writing instrument **12** will have a writing tip **73** at first end **13** and a writing tip **75** and second end **15**. Such a writing instrument will have a gripping element **10** configured to be positioned equidistant from ends **40 13** and **42 15**. It will be appreciated that the central portion of gripping element **10** allows for enhanced gripping during use of either writing tip without requiring the covering of the entire writing instrument body. If two writing types are provided, one may be configured for fine writing (*e.g.*, a ballpoint or roller ball or fine felt or synthetic nib) and the other writing tip may be configured for writing while holding the writing instrument like a wand, as described above.